

Convince Important People to see you

By Andy Bounds



One of my friends has a very nice, very expensive coat.

But he keeps forgetting he owns it. So doesn't wear it much.

And then, when he does put it on, it reminds his wife she hasn't seen him in it recently. Which leads her to say "you never wear that coat."

But he's wearing it when she says this. Which makes his reply:

"Your point might be valid. But your timing sucks"

A lot of communication is like that. Yes, content is critical. But so too is the timing of it.

For example, if you're communicating with an Important Person (your boss, a potential customer etc.) and want Meeting One to lead to Meeting Two, agree the follow-up during Meeting One. After all, which is more likely to work?

- *During Meeting One:* "I'm enjoying our meeting, and look forward to developing our ideas over the next few days. When would be good for you, for us to discuss things further?"
- *After Meeting One:* you wait by the phone for them to call. They don't. You keep looking at your inbox. They don't email either. You're now left

with the awful choice: do you call them and worry you're pestering? Or do your wait and feel powerless?

Another example: you send a written proposal, but hear nothing back. You're now worried you're about to face the Black Hole of Doom where proposals often end-up. You're back in the "do I pester or feel powerless?" dilemma again.

Once again, the solution's all in the timing: *before* you send the proposal, say "I'll send it to you tomorrow. Let's keep our momentum going. When shall we speak again to discuss it? [They give a time] Great - let's put that time in our diaries."

In both examples, you will notice that I used the:

- Right timing: I asked for Communication Two *during* Communication One
- Right content: I said "*when* shall we speak again?" not "*shall* we speak again?" (you're much more likely to get a 'yes' if you ask a yes/yes question, not a yes/no)

And talking of timing, why is it that you never read to the bottom of my Tuesday Tips?

Action point

This month, I guess you'll be working on something which could easily lose momentum because the other person doesn't

reply as quickly as you'd like.

Ensure there is momentum, by agreeing *when* you'll speak again *during* Meeting One. And avoid that Black Hole of Doom!

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About the Author

Andy Bounds is an expert at helping companies communicate and sell better. Author of two best-selling books and winner of the title Britain's Sales Trainer of the Year, Andy has shared his expertise with some of the world's largest companies, helping every one of them have more success. Marketing legend Drayton Bird said Andy had taught him '... more about effective communicating than a lady who'd taught two American Presidents'.

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